

20704

January 30, 1966

President, C.B.S. News
Columbia Broadcasting System
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir,

Even if there were no snow on the ground rather than the 30 inches we have, and even if I could have gone somewhere today instead of being isolated by massive drifts and blocked roads, I would not have missed "The Congress and the War". It is a major contribution to electronic journalism's return to the respected position in once ~~old~~ world, especially on your network. And it is, as you of course know, in the best American tradition of public discussion of major issues. You could find none more important.

I am particularly happy that your experiences over the Safer affair, in itself a testimonial to your integrity, did not dissuade you or the network. Congratulations! The same goes for the Twentieth Century's Ho Chi Minh show and I am confident it will be no less true of your airing of Senator Fulbright Tuesday night.

These things interest me not only for their importance, which is great, but because I should like to be able to draw upon them in my own writing. If you have scripts, I would very much appreciate copies and permission to quote, with attribution.

In expressing admiration for your responsibility and willingness to face pressure and criticism from sources that can press and hurt, I am not speaking with only an academic understanding. Almost a year ago I completed a book, under contract, that the publisher told me in advance would be the most important thing he ever did and after receiving it would be a gold-plated best seller. He broke his contract. The next two senior editors of major houses who read it also evaluated it as a best seller and one, after readings by three others on his staff, said they'd make it the best selling book of 1965. In all about 50 publishers will not touch the subject. About half would not consider it at all and would not read the book. From the others eloquent praise and no contract. Some frankly say fear (self imposed, but of the government) is the reason. Others allege there is no interest in the subject. Yet it is one on which not a single responsible book has appeared. It's title: Whitewash: The Report On The Warren Report. It is unassailable because it is restricted entirely to the Commission's own evidence, to which it is exhaustively footnoted. At the moment it has received preliminary approval by all three of the publishers who now have it. I believe it is a sensation and a news story second only to the assassination in our recent history. If and when I get a publisher, do you think you'd be interested in TV rights? If you have any interest, let me know. I expect to be in New York soon and can give or send you a copy. Although I haven't asked their premission, should you want an evaluation, why not phone Howard Cady, executive editor and McKay, or Allan Bernard, executive editor at Bantam, or Edwin Seaver at Braziller. I would, however, because they have taken positions in opposition to their publishers, ask you to keep this in confidence.

Keep up the good work. Our country and the world need more of it. Sincerely,